

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks on Lighting the National Christmas Tree

November 30, 2023

The President. Five, four, three, two, one!

[At this point, the President and First Lady lit the National Christmas Tree.]

All right. They've got it.

Musician Mickey Guyton. Merry Christmas, everyone!

The President. Merry Christmas, everybody!

Jill and I are honored to welcome you. *[Inaudible]*

[The U.S. Marine Corps Band played an arrangement of "Deck the Halls." The President then resumed his remarks as follows.]

All right. Again, merry Christmas, everyone. Have a seat, if you'd like.

Jill and I are honored to welcome you to the National Christmas Tree lighting.

Thanks to the Interior Secretary Deb Haaland and the National Park Service Foundation. They're the one doing this.

And a special thanks to tonight's host, Mickey, and all those incredible performers we have here tonight.

This is a great tradition, one, as has been pointed out already, we've honored over 100 years, where Presidents and the people come together to usher in the holiday season.

Earlier this week, Jill and I announced the theme—Jill announced the theme of this year's holiday at the White House: "Magic, Wonder, and Joy."

Three words that capture the essence of Christmas and the holidays to rediscover for ourselves the simple joys of the season, from familiar songs to favorite recipes; to open the hearts with simple acts of kindness, especially to those going through hard times; and to strengthen the bonds with family and friends, as well as with our faith and our community; to remember we're a great nation because we're a good people.

That's what I see all across America, including tonight.

Joining us are 43 members of Team U.S.A. who represented our Nation at the Invictus Games this past September. Give them a hand.

Jill and Prince Harry went to the first Invictus Games in '14. And Invictus Games in Ontario, I was there in '16, in Toronto. Anyways, there's been great, great, great effort that we've seen.

And you know, these athletes were incredible: wounded warriors from service branches—every service branch—in the essence of who we are as Americans.

We look to one another, and we look out for one another. We leave no one behind. And for our best, we are united at our best. And we are the United States of America.

We begin another holiday season. Let's remember how blessed we are as Americans for the gift that is our Nation.

So merry Christmas, America.

May God bless you all, and may God protect our troops. Merry, merry Christmas.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:07 p.m. on the Ellipse at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, of the United Kingdom.

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